THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) No, Sir. Bills are sent timely and correctly. During past six months only 18 complaints were received and they have been settled promptly.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) Telephone Adalats and Open House Sessions are held once in two months where subscribers are heard in person.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

Security precautions in Postal Department

1919. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether computerization in Postal Department has increased the paper work instead of reducing it and added to the possibilities of frauds and embezzlement in the absence of security precautions; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps taken to address the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The computerization in the Department of Posts has helped in reduction of paper work. The application softwares, currently in use in post offices, have several in-built security features and they are constantly improved upon. Detailed security instructions to be followed in computerized Post Offices have also been issued to guard against fraud and embezzlement.

Electronic Telephone Exchanges in Arunachal Pradesh

1920. SHRI NABAM REBIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Telephone Exchanges in the State of Arunachal Pradesh which have been converted into Electronic Exchange during the last three years;

(b) the details of targets fixed for the same during this period; and

(c) the details of funds granted and utilized in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) to (c) No Telephone Exchanges in Arunachal Pradesh have been converted into electronic exchanges during last three years, as all the exchanges are already electronic exchanges.

Bringing TRAI under CAG

1921. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether in the larger interests of the public, out of whose money regulatory bodies that have been created, there is a move to bring the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) within the ambit of the Comptroller & Auditor General of India;

(b) whether TRAI had consistently remained passive on crucial matters like grey market calls causing loss to the public exchequer by declining to adjudicate complaints from BSNL and on the creation of Universal Service Fund to implement rural telecom projects; and

(c) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) is within the ambit of Comptroller and Auditor General of India (C&AG) by virtue of sub-section 2 and 3 of Section 23 of the TRAI Act under which C&AG audit the accounts of TRAI.

(b) and (c) Under the TRAI Act, TRAI can investigate complaints but it does not have powers to adjudicate on complaints.

Universal Service Obligation Fund (USO Fund) was created by the Central Government in April, 2002 on the basis of the recommendations received from TRAI.

Surrender of telephones

1922 SHRI R. KAMARAJ: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of landline telephone connections surrendered by the subscribers of both MTNL and BSNL till March, 2005;